

THE TWO MISS MANNINGS

Astro, Seer of Secrets, Applies the Tree of Paracelsus as a Parable of Human Nature

By Alan Braghampton

Drawings by George Brehm

COME here, Valeska, please!" Astro called from the small laboratory that led off the great studio. Here the seer pursued his studies in physics, chemistry, and pathology. Here he had his microscope, over which he spent most of his leisure. Here, now, he stood before the window, dressed in a denim suit, holding to the light a corked test tube.

He was looking at it when Valeska, his pretty assistant in his fortune telling, entered, smiling, ready for a new marvel, a new philosophic theory, some shrewd comment on human nature, or what other thought had sprung from the master's prolific brain. She looked over his shoulder, letting her chin touch it, even; though she did not often permit herself even such slight familiarity as this.

He did not turn his head. Instead, without speaking, he unstopped the tube gently. Immediately in the glass cylinder a tiny miracle appeared. A white ray sprang from the bottom of the colorless liquid. It divided and subdivided, branching in a dozen directions; and as she looked it grew rapidly, until the interior of the vessel was filled as if by magic with a feathery, delicate mass of crystals.

"Oh! How very beautiful—how wonderful!" she gasped.

He put the tube into her hand and sat down on the table.

"The Tree of Paracelsus," he remarked. "In the olden time it was accounted magic. With that simple experiment with sodium sulphate Dukes and Kings may have been beguiled, fortunes won, the lives of great men changed. Those were the palmy days for charlatans, Valeska. It paid well to be an alchemist in the Middle Ages; that is, if you escaped being put to death for it."

As she handed back the tube, he gazed on it thoughtfully for a moment; and then, holding it over a Bunsen burner, warmed the tube. In a few moments the crystals began to melt. The tree shrank and disappeared. He gave it a shake, and the solution was transparent again. He set it in a rack and smiled.

Valeska waited, knowing that this was not mere amusement. It was like him to wait for her to fathom, if she could, what he was thinking. But his mind surpassed hers; she could only follow him at times, now oftener than at first. Here she had no clue.

"It's a moral lesson," he said. "It is a parable of human nature and its mysteries. Why do we become absolutely different persons when we are angry? I am, we'll say, like this clear solution, hermetically sealed from the atmosphere of strife. Open the cork, or drop in a crystal of anger. Immediately, without apparent reason, I am changed; but not so beautifully as this. Warm this tree of acrid bitterness that has sprung up, and I melt into good nature again. Reading Paracelsus, the analogy came into my mind. Thus endeth the first lesson."

And, so saying, he stripped off his working clothes, attired himself in gown and turban, and, as he changed his costume, became again the inscrutable, calm seer, ready for his patrons. He walked into the dim studio, took a gyroscope from a taboret, and spun it on a little standard.

Valeska's look followed him. His eyes questioned her. She drew down her fair brows and watched the toy, supported, seemingly immune from the power of gravitation, as it revolved slowly in its orbit, its wheel flying too fast for its motion to be perceived.

She spoke timidly. "Human emotions—the downward pull—governed and held in equilibrium by—"

"The trained mind, the intellect," he suggested. "Very well, Valeska. Very well indeed! You're coming on." He yawned. "Well, now for work! It's dangerous pushing analogies too far."

WELL, about that young man who came yesterday?"

"Oh, yes. I didn't have time to see him. Besides, it's time you were taking some cases off my hands, and he didn't seem too anxious. I know you prefer men to women." He watched her from the tail of his eye.

"I don't!" she protested, blushing.

Astro seemed pleased. "Well, it's agreeable for them, at any rate. What was the story?"

"Why, it's most romantic! It's perfectly ridiculous, though! He wants you to find a strange



woman whom he saw on the subway."

"How strange?"

"Oh, strange enough in every way. And it's a hard problem, too."

"First, who is he?"

"He's a Mr. Jenson, and he said to ring him up at Madison 2995 between nine and two o'clock. Those are banking hours. And I found out the number was that of the Sixth Avenue National."

"Very good. Go on."

"Well, yesterday at four o'clock, he took a local in the subway at 23d-st. Between 28th-st. and 33d, an uptown express passed him. You know how, sometimes, two trains keep side by side for a short distance, exactly even, and then the express shoots ahead?"

"Yes. I've often thought of complications arising from two passengers watching each other."

"Which is exactly what happened. Directly opposite his window was a beautiful girl sitting in the express. She seemed fearfully agitated, and looked at him strangely; almost as if she recognized him, though he's sure he has never seen her before. But he had another sort of feeling—an emotion—as if somehow she was something to him,—one might call it a sudden feeling of affinity,—a real love at first sight."

"Oh, in the circumstances she felt safe enough to flirt with him, I suppose."

"Oh, that's impossible; for it seemed evident that she didn't feel safe at all,—in fact that she was in a great danger, and was so distressed that she made a mute appeal to him for help."

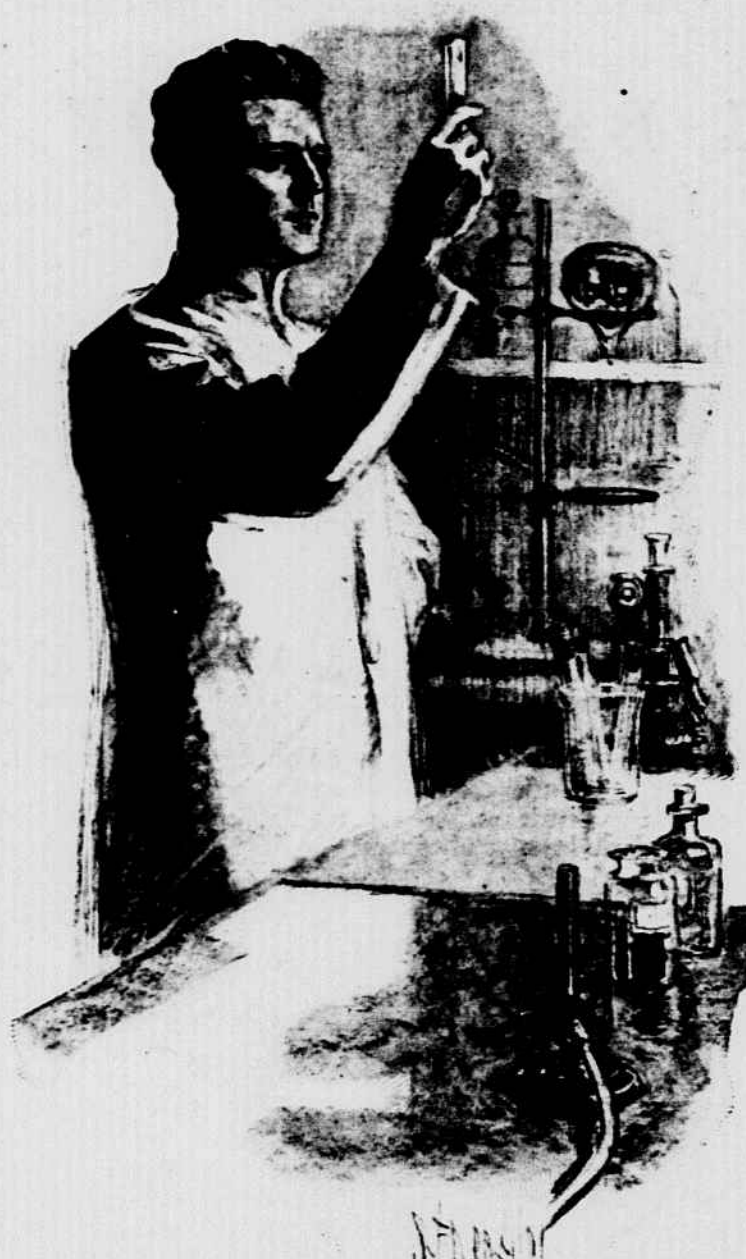
"Why to him?"

"To him, he thinks, perhaps too sentimentally, because she too felt the mysterious affinity,—whatever it is, trust in him, or something. And she asked him to help her."

Astro stared. "Asked him! How, pray? She had only a few moments, and I suppose the windows were shut. They always are, even in summer."

"Yes; but she was really clever. She had a newspaper in her hand. On the front page were the headlines. Here, I have a yesterday's paper."

She took up a copy of "The Gazette" and pointed



The Tree Shrank and Disappeared.

to the scarehead, "Tammany Will Help Push the New Viaduct," in such a way that the word "Help" was evident.

"Then," Valeska continued, "she gave him a number, 3324, one digit at a time, on her fingers."

"I see. And Mr. Jenson, I suppose, wants to know the lady's name and address, and what she wanted?"

"Exactly. Of course the number was that of her house; but what street?"

Astro snapped his fingers impatiently. "It was her telephone number. Didn't she make any sign to show the Central?"

"Why, just as she got to the 4, the train she was in swept out of sight as his slowed up at the 33d-st. station."

Astro thought for awhile. Finally he said, "Take the telephone book and make a list of all the Centrals, first thing. Then we'll have to use our pull with the company to find out the names and addresses of all the 3324's, and send men to investigate. It's merely a question of elimination then. But the question is, What was the matter? That requires thought. What happened yesterday? I suppose you've finished all the papers?"

"Yes; but there was nothing that seemed important to me."

"Then I'll have to look over the files myself. What a bore!"

He went into the waiting room and began listlessly to turn the sheets. He had not gone far before Valeska heard a low whistle. Running up to him, she saw him reading a news item under the following headings: "Aged Woman Killed in Subway Station. Run Over by Downtown Express After Falling on Track in View of Crowd."

"Look at that!" he exclaimed. "This happened at quarter to three o'clock yesterday. The mysterious lady might easily have been at the 14th-st. station at the time of the accident."

"And what does that prove?"

"Nothing yet; but it's a chance for a clue; a queer coincidence, at any rate. I'll take a think, when I have leisure."

He went back to the studio, and, after he had finished reading the palm of his first client, Valeska entered with the list:

Audubon	Cortland	Melrose	Stuyvesant
Barclay	Franklin	Morningside	Thirty-eighth
Beekman	Gramercy	Orchard	Tremont
Broad	Hanover	Plaza	Westchester
Bryant	Harlem	Rector	Williamsburg
Chelsea	John	Riverside	Worth
City Island	Kingsbridge	Seventy-ninth	
Columbus	Madison Sq.	Spring	

Astro glanced it over, and penciled it as he talked. "We'll first strike out all the stations obviously not in the residence districts where the lady would be likely to live. We may leave out Beekman, Barclay, Broad, City Island, Franklin, Cortland, John, Hanover, Orchard, Rector, and Worth. That leaves us still nineteen numbers to investigate. Now, if the young lady wanted help badly enough to appeal to a casual stranger, and for that purpose tried to communicate her telephone number, it must have been that she was going directly home, and wanted a quick reply. As she was on a subway express at 33d-st., then she couldn't be in either the Chelsea, Gramercy, Madison Square, Spring, or Stuyvesant districts. The subway does not go near the Harlem, Melrose, Seventy-ninth, Tremont, Westchester, or Williamsburg sections. Let's see, then, what is left: Audubon, Bryant, Columbus, Kingsbridge, Morningside, Riverside, and Thirty-eighth. Ring up Mr. Potter in the advertising department of the telephone company, and tell him I'd like to find the names and addresses of No. 3324 in each of those seven exchanges."

Valeska left the studio on this errand, and, as no client appeared, Astro picked up his Paracelsus and went on with his reading. He had finished the chapter on "Aqueous Vapors" when she returned. He took up her memorandum and looked it over. The Audubon and Kingsbridge addresses he eliminated, for the present, being apartment houses with private exchanges. The "Social Register" enabled him to identify the persons in the Morningside, Plaza, and Riverside districts. There were left only three addresses, as follows:

(Bryant, 3324) H. J. Cook 199 West 45th-st.
(Columbus, 3324) Peter J. Manning, 521 West 73d-st.
(38th-st., 3324) Alpheus Hardy, 118 East 36th-st.

"Well," he said, "the last one, Hardy, must go, because if she was going to East 36th-st., the lady would have taken a local to 33d-st. station. Tomorrow we'll see what we can find out about the Cooks and Mannings. We'll see if my theory is correct. You have a description of the girl, I suppose?"

"Such as it is, not much; though he'd know her, of course, if he saw her again. He was too busy trying to take her message to have noticed or recalled much. He did say she wore chinchilla furs, though, had reddish hair, and either a scar or a deep dimple in her chin."

"I hope it's a dimple," said Astro, taking up his Paracelsus.

Valeska pouted, shook her fist at him, and retired. The next morning a man purporting to be an

agent of the New York Directory Company called at 199 West 45th-st. and asked many questions. He had an affable way with him that quite won the heart of the maid who answered the door. She denied, however, that there was any young woman living in the house, which belonged to H. J. Cook.

That afternoon the same agent called at 521 West 73d-st. He was met by a butler, who treated the agent with cold disdain and refused to commit himself more than to assert that the house was the residence of Peter J. Manning, wholesale wool dealer. The servant thawed out, however, in an interview with a young woman who called later, asking for Miss Manning. Miss Manning, he ventured to say, was out; but was expected back at two o'clock. He had not heard that she had lost any chinchilla furs; but hoped the young lady would return, and if the furs found belonged to Miss Manning, he was sure that the finder would be well rewarded. Yes, he had seen Miss Manning with chinchillas, and it was his opinion that she had them on when she left the house at ten o'clock that morning. He hoped the young lady would call again.

At one o'clock, a coupé drew up at the corner of West 73d-st. and Broadway and stopped. The curtains were drawn at the side of the carriage; but a man's face occasionally looked out from the little window in the end. Two o'clock passed, and three.

Meanwhile, another coupé had been standing at the corner of West End-ave., at the other end of the same block. In this also the curtains were drawn; but at times a passing pedestrian caught sight of a young woman's pretty face, with light hair and hazel eyes. At about half-past two o'clock a woman wearing chinchilla furs passed the carriage. Its occupant immediately alighted and, after a word to the driver, followed her, who walked rapidly along 73d-st., and ran up the steps of number 521. The follower did not stop, however, but went to Broadway, spoke to the driver of the waiting cab, and sprang in. It immediately drove off.

At the studio Valeska went immediately to the telephone and rang up Jenson.

"The person you inquired about," she said, "is Miss Margaret Manning, and she is now at 521 West 73d-st. I gave the master the card case you left, and with that as a test he went into an astral trance yesterday. While in that state he saw, clairvoyantly, the scene you described, as well as the girl's subsequent movements."

She waited for the reply, and then smiled as she answered, "I'm afraid I cannot tell you more of her, Mr. Jenson. The master does not feel that he is at liberty to disclose the secrets revealed to him while in this astral state. Should events prove it advisable, however, he will inform you as far as possible. The girl is in trouble; but we must make sure that she desires your assistance before we let you into the details of her life. Yes, please send a check to Astro. One hundred dollars. Thank you."

"Oh, the girl is in trouble, is she, sorceress?" Astro asked languidly, looking up from where he was toying with his pet white lizard.

"Why, of course! What woman isn't?" said Valeska. "Did you ever encounter one who didn't have a secret sorrow, big or little?"

"My dear," and Astro playfully chucked her

under the chin, "you are positively learning. You are right, of course. The first thing a charlatan has to learn is that every man likes to be understood, and every woman to be misunderstood. Both like to be considered sensitive, critical, good judges of human nature, and of delicate perceptions. No one objects to being called reckless; but everyone dislikes being considered stupid. But, seriously, of course the chances are ten to one that Miss Manning has some pet mania, and if she hasn't Jenson will never know. At any rate, we have done our part. We'll see him again, though. Any man who has that affinity idea may be depended upon to do something foolish."

It was two weeks after that, however, before Jenson was heard from. He came in late one afternoon, pink cheeked and immaculate, in stylish clothes, a clean shaven, fresh young man, evidently wealthy. Astro received him gravely. The seer had on his oriental costume and his most effete manner.

"See here!" the young man began. "You're a wonder, I've got to confess that! I take off my hat to you, Astro. I don't know how you do it, but you certainly deliver the goods. I don't mind telling you that I came to this place as the result

of a bet. I saw that girl in the subway and told one of my friends about it. He said, 'You go to Astro; he can do anything.' Of course I didn't believe it, and all this nonsense about astral trances is rot. All the same, you did find the girl. It was Miss Manning, all right."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Jenson," Astro's voice was a bit sarcastic, "I presume you did not come here to insult me. I take your exuberance as mere youth. As you know nothing of my methods, it would be courtesy, since they are successful, to accept what explanation I am pleased to offer. But I pass that by."

"I say, you know, I didn't mean to offend you," Jenson was visibly embarrassed.

Without reply, Astro rose and touched a gong. Valeska entered immediately. With a gesture toward the young man, the seer left the studio.

"I say, I'm sorry!" Jenson began.

"The master has his moods," said Valeska.

"I wanted to ask his advice."

"You may deal with me, and if he decides to continue with your case I shall let you know." Valeska looked her sweetest; but her voice was crisp and cool.

"Well, the fact is, I've seen Miss Manning three times, and she certainly has got me going. I wanted to talk to Astro about it."

"Talk to me."

"Well, it was this way. I went up to 73d-st. and hung around the afternoon you telephoned, and I did succeed in seeing her; but I was across the street, and before I could get to her she had got into a carriage. Well, I've been up there since very often; but I never caught her till about ten days ago. She was walking down the block, and as I passed her she recognized me and stopped. The first thing she said was, 'Can you help me? Will you help me?' I said of course I would. It was romantic. I don't mind saying it was mighty exciting to me. We walked a way, and she told me an extraordinary thing. I can't believe it; indeed it's impossible. But she believed it, though she said it was impossible, too."

"Well, what was it?"

"Why, she said, 'I'm frightened because something that's obviously impossible is true. One hour ago I was in Chicago.' What do you think of that?"

"I should say that she was insane."

"That was my first idea; but, as you see, she herself admitted that such a thing was impossible, as it takes twenty-four hours to go from Chicago to New York. It was four o'clock. She said she was in Chicago in front of the Auditorium at three."

"Well, what did she expect you to do for her?"

"Why, that wasn't all; she said she had no idea

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"The First Thing She Said Was, 'Can You Help Me?'"

THE BREATH OF LIFE

By H. Irving Hancock

DEEP breathing may be defined as the art of living long and healthily. All other things being equal, the more we breathe deeply and the purer air we breathe, the longer and more efficient will be our span on earth.

Of the mixture of gases that compose the air, oxygen is the one of prime importance in regulating the body's inner affairs. Oxygen has been defined as the most imperative of all the body's needs. Without food, shelter, water, warmth, clothing, we are capable of living for sometime, but without oxygen, life for even a few minutes is an impossibility.

Yet with all our growing knowledge of these facts, a large percentage of us are next to absolutely indifferent as to the quality of the air we breathe, provided only that no conscious bodily discomfort comes from breathing bad air. There are relatively few who comprehend the great need of deep breathing sufficiently to practise it as an important daily habit.

Oxygen is needed to carry on in the body the oxidation processes that are necessary to life. In the lungs the blood makes an exchange, giving up carbon dioxide and water and taking from the freshly inhaled breath the new oxygen that is needed. This oxygen combines with hemoglobin, the red coloring matter of the blood, to form a compound known as oxyhemoglobin. In this form the oxygen is carried along by the blood to every tissue in the body. In this new compound oxygen is held very loosely in combination, and wherever there is waste matter in the tissues to be destroyed oxygen attacks it, "burning it up." The carbon dioxide and water that result from this combustion are carried along by the veins to the lungs and given off.

In watching the lower animals we note that they naturally breathe through the nostrils. Man has caught this trick to a great extent, especially when engaged in athletics or hard work. There can be no

doubt that Nature intended we should breathe through the nose. That organ is fitted for keeping out of our lungs much dust that we should breathe in through the mouth. Moreover, cold air breathed through the nose is much warmed before it reaches the lungs. This warming amounts to about sixty per cent. of the difference between the outer air and the blood temperature. Thus, if we breathe air that stands at forty-eight degrees, and our blood is ninety-eight degrees, the difference would be fifty degrees. Sixty per cent. of fifty is thirty, which, added to forty-eight, shows that under such conditions air at forty-eight would be tempered to seventy-eight degrees before striking the sensitive lung surface.

Nasal breathing is of the greatest value when going into an atmosphere of contagion or infection. The moist fluid secreted in the nose has been much examined in laboratories, and it has been definitely established that the fluid is destructive of several harmful bacteria. It would appear, in other words, that Nature gives us a prime good germicide to carry around with us at all times, and that all we have to do is to remember to breathe through the nose.

Yet, though the need of oxygen is admitted, why should we breathe deeply? First, in order that the blood may have at all moments all it may possibly demand. An equally important reason for deep breathing is found in the structure of the lungs. The inner walls lie in folds when not filled with air. With people who breathe lightly some of these folds are rarely increased. Nearly eighty per cent. of all lung diseases, including tuberculosis, start at or near the apex of one of the lungs. This is because, without deep breathing, the upper portions of the

lungs become inactive, and waste, impure matter, accumulates there.

These tiny breathing cells of the lungs, the alveoli, number more than eight hundred millions in an average adult. The cells present a combined breathing surface of more than eighty-one square meters, or about fifty-four times the outer surface of the body. All these alveolar surfaces should have full employment, which is impossible without deep breathing, for the movements of the lungs are wholly passive, depending on the movements of the chest. When the latter is expanded and the ribs thrown well out and upward, air rushes into the hitherto unused portions of the lungs.

When the chest has been permanently enlarged by deep breathing and chest expanding exercises, then the lungs take in greater gulps of air at every breath; for they will take in all that the position of the ribs allows. Hence, what we call a "well developed chest" insures greater quantities of oxygen reaching the blood. Deep breathing, as a constant habit, is an important part of the treatment of anemia.

Deep abdominal breathing is open to the objection that it does not sufficiently fill the apex of the lung. The lateral breathing of the singer is therefore to be preferred. This is done, without raising the shoulders, by breathing in deeply to make the ribs expand sidewise, like a bellows. A simple and effective exercise for permanently enlarging the "rib cage" is found by standing erect in the open air or at an open window, closing the mouth and breathing in through the nose by successive gulps all the air that can be drawn into the lungs—to the very last gulp. Hold this air in the lungs as long as can be done with comfort, then expel swiftly through the mouth. Fifteen minutes a day devoted to repeating this exercise will give a considerable increase in chest expansion in a few weeks.

The Two Miss Mannings

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where she was, or what she was doing in New York. She didn't even know who the people were she was living with. She remembered having signaled to me on the train. She was lost then, too. She suddenly found herself with a stranger, a man who seemed to think he was her protector; but she was afraid of him. She had just heard him give his telephone number to a friend who had passed through the car. That was all the clue she had to where she was going. So she signaled that to me; but didn't have time to give the name of the exchange, 'Columbus.' She wanted me to take her to Chicago immediately. I told her that was impossible; but that I'd go the next day with her and take her home. She was afraid of this man's following her. I made an appointment for the next morning. She was to meet me in the Waldorf-Astoria palm room at ten o'clock."

"And she didn't come, of course?"

"No. I got frightened,—thought that something serious was the matter,—and called at her house. Sent up my name. She came down and wanted to know what I wanted. She pretended not to know me, and I was in a deuce of a situation. I floundered out of it as best I could; told her I had an appointment. She denied it; said she didn't know me, nor what I was talking about. And there you are!" Jenson crossed his legs and gazed at Valeska with big eyes.

"Well, I suppose you wish the master to explain this?"

"That's what I came here for. I told him the first time I came it was on account of a wager. I bet my friend fifty dollars that Astro couldn't find the girl. Well, I lost. This time I come believing in him. Will you see what you can do? I confess I'm fond of that girl. I've felt it from the beginning, the very first glance. I want to help her. I want to know her, and, you may think it absurd, but I want to marry her." He folded his arms and became almost defiant.

Valeska rose. "Very well. I can promise nothing; but I will put it before the master, and, as I said, I will let you know his decision. Of myself I can do nothing; but I will try to influence him."

Jenson left, thanking her profusely. Just as he opened the door, he said embarrassedly, "See here; I'd do anything for that girl!"

"Would you really?" Valeska asked, smiling.

"I mean just that,—anything!" And Jenson went out the door with a grim look on his face.

VALESKA came back into the studio laughing. "Do tell me what it means!" she exclaimed after she had told the story to Astro.

He yawned. "Isn't Miss Manning calling quite often at No. 85 Central Park South?" he remarked casually, examining his long nails.

"Why, how do you know? I didn't know you had done anything more on the case."

"I haven't. It's scarcely necessary."

"But who is she going to see?"

"Dr. George Herreschoff."

"A specialist?"

"A neurologist."

"I don't understand."

"Well, I'll give you a book by Dr. Morton Prince to read. You'll find it as exciting as a novel; I might venture to say as exciting as Mr. Jenson's experience with Miss Manning."

Valeska knew more than to ask further. The seer usually gave her a hint and let her exert her imagination.

"Don't forget the accident in the subway station at 14th-st. And there's an article in the November number of 'The Journal of Abnormal Psychology,'" he added.

He rose, went to the bookshelves that lined three walls of the vast studio, took down the book and the little magazine, and gave them to her with a smile. Then he walked into his laboratory to prepare, for her edification, the Arbor Jovis, the Arbor Dianæ, and the Arbor Saturni, the Trees of Tin, Silver, and Lead.

He stuck his head out of the door a half-hour later and called over to where Valeska was reading under a lamp. "Your friend Jenson will never marry that girl he's after!"

"Oh, won't he?"

"No; she's going to disappear."

Valeska stared at him in wonder. Her look changed to amazement when he added:

"But he may marry Margaret Manning."

"Why, she is Margaret Manning," she replied, still puzzled.

"No, she isn't," he said, laughing, and shut the door of the laboratory to keep out the fumes of the chlorin that were pouring from a flask in a heavy purple smoke.

THE next day Jenson telephoned to the studio. Valeska came back from her conversation with him, leaving the receiver off the hook. "He says he has met Miss Manning again, and she still is urging him to take her to Chicago. But he has begun to be suspicious of her, and doubts if he ought to do it. He wants your advice."

Astro smiled. "You might tell him what I told you yesterday."

"Ah; but what's the use if he hasn't read 'The Dissociation of a Personality'?"

"Then suppose you advise him to call on Dr. Herreschoff and ask his advice."

"Shall I, really? Who is he?"

"The most famous specialist on nervous diseases in America, who knows more of multiple or dissociated personality than anyone living."

"Oh, I see. I'll tell him." And Valeska returned to the telephone to repeat the address.

"You understand now?" Astro asked.

"Of course. Miss Manning has a dual personality. In her normal state she does not of course recall Mr. Jenson. In her secondary state she appealed to him for help."

"Because she literally did not know where

she was," added Astro. "Doubtless, from his story, while she was in Chicago she changed into the secondary character, in which she did not even know her own brother. She alternated between the two states, which may be called the A and the B. It is often the case that a mental or physical shock entirely changes the personality. That's what occurred to me on reading of the accident at the subway station. No doubt she witnessed the accident. The shock broke up her personality, changed A, her normal state, into B. She had, perhaps, been B before, in Chicago. But, finding herself with a man she did not recognize, she became alarmed. Her impulse was to appeal to the first likely looking stranger for help. Somehow she was attracted to Jenson, and so she signaled to him."

"Then she was B again when she asked him to take her to Chicago?"

"Certainly. Of course she must have gone to Chicago between the time he saw her on the train and when he met her in the street. She recalled having been in Chicago at three o'clock. She must have changed almost immediately, and taken the train soon afterward. Then, upon arriving in New York, something threw her back into the B state again. Owing to her amnesia, while in the secondary state, she forgot all that had happened, and thought it was the same day that she was in Chicago. But when he called at the house she had changed back to her normal condition. All that is evident from his story. It is as evident that such a case would be brought to Dr. Herreschoff for treatment, and doubtless he will be very glad to meet Jenson, who knows something of what has happened to her in this abnormal or B state. The doctor will undoubtedly treat her hypnotically and restore her to a permanently normal personality."

"And that's how Mr. Jenson's friend, poor B, will disappear?"

"Yes. There is, properly, no such person. B is merely a part of Miss Manning,—Miss Manning with certain faculties, including memory, missing. It's not so interesting a case as that of Miss Beauchamp, which Dr. Prince has written of, nor of the celebrated Felida X reported by Azan. Of course there are all sorts of dissociations. Some persons break up into three or four separate and intermittent personalities. But Miss Manning is certainly interesting. I'd like to meet her, myself."

"And I'd like to know how poor Jenson's love affair will turn out," said Valeska. "I'm sorry for him."

"I've no doubt he'll not only lose the girl he has fallen in love with, but he'll be asked to help in putting her out of existence."

"That's simply horrible! He said he'd do anything for her. I wonder if he'd do that? But it's all so mysterious and so impossible! Why, one might as well believe in witchcraft or magic, it seems to me."

"It is just exactly what was called witchcraft in the old days. Now we understand it, and it is merely psychology."

ASTRO rose and pointed to the laboratory. "Do you remember the Tree of Paracelsus?" he asked.

Valeska nodded.

"It is like that. In the Middle Ages that experiment was nothing except pure magic. No common person could understand that the clear solution and the mass of crystals were different forms of the same thing,—sulphate of sodium and water. In the same way, no one understood that one person could appear at different times under different forms; it was enchantment. To-day we understand that one's personality is merely the sum of his qualities, emotions, and functions. This solid person may break up into other combinations; part of his functions may become synthesized and have a volition of this new group's own character. We see it every day. When we lose our temper we become temporarily dissociated. We say things foreign to our true nature. When we sleep, too, we become different in many ways. Occasionally some natures in a state of unstable equilibrium topple over and change their mental and spiritual structure. Then we have such patients as Miss Beauchamp, as Miss Smith reported by Flournoy, as Mrs. Smead whom Hyslop describes, like Ansel Bourne studied by Dr. Hodgson and Professor James. And how many unknown such are confined in insane asylums, who might be easily restored to normality, God knows!"

He had been walking up and down the great studio as he talked. Now he returned to Valeska, and for an instant his hand rested on her blond head.

"There's one thing more potent than mental shock that changes men's personality often enough," he said softly.

She looked up quickly, uncomprehending. "What do you mean?"

"Did I say one thing? There are two things that change a man's character essentially," he went on, looking at her thoughtfully. "One is a profound sorrow; the other is love." He walked away to the window. "Dickens understood that," he threw over his shoulder.

Valeska turned her eyes away from him, then rose and passed into the waiting room.

THREE days after that, Jenson called. He was no longer the blithe and joyous young man of fashion. Instead, he seemed prematurely old. His eyes were softer, his manner less careless.

"It all came true as Astro predicted," he said to Valeska, talking it over: "even to my never marrying the girl I fell in love with. Dr. Herreschoff told me all about her case, and asked my assistance in bringing her back to her true

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self. In her normal state she does not know me at all; in fact, there is a dislike of me, on account of my having been mixed up with her secondary self,—the girl who asked my help. But the doctor thinks my companionship is beneficial, and I have consented to give my assistance. If she appears in her abnormal state, I shall take her to him and have her treated hypnotically. Her changes come less often, and he thinks she will soon be permanently normal."

"You do love her, indeed!" Valeska breathed in admiration.

"Enough to murder her, in a way of speaking, for her own good!" he replied grimly. "But didn't I tell you I would do anything for that girl? Anything! Could anything harder be asked of me than that I should help myself to lose her forever?" He smiled wanly as he spoke.

"Oh, it won't be lost, that sacrifice!" Valeska exclaimed. "She will realize what you have done, in time, and she will—she must love you for it! Then it will be she herself, not a mere part of her personality, but the whole woman, who will repay you with her love."

"Perhaps," Jensen rose to go, and stood a moment, sadly thoughtful. "But somehow—confound it that other girl, you know!—she

was the one, after all— Well, I've given my word. All I want is her well being. I'm satisfied. Goodby!" and he wrung Valeska's hand till the tears came into her eyes, though she made no sound.

SHE came back into the great studio and found Astro gazing abstractedly out of the window. He was so lost in his reverie that he did not notice her approach till she had laid a hand on his shoulder. Then he looked round, startled. His face changed wonderfully and became infinitely tender.

"You were right," she said softly: "there are two things that change human character, love and sorrow. Our poor Mr. Jensen has tasted both, I think."

"It will make a man of him," said Astro. "I hope it may make a man of me!"

He walked into the little laboratory. Into a Florence flask filled with a solution of lead acetate he dropped a few pieces of zinc. In an hour there had grown up, exquisitely feathery and foliated, the crystalline Tree of Lead, the Arbor Saturni of the alchemists, potent with its parable of life. Valeska found it there, looked at it a moment, and bit her lip in silence.

The next "Seer of Secrets" story, "Van Austen's Visitor," will appear April 11.

Maureen's Dowry

Continued from page 6

embroidery. So you can tell Maureen I'll take her."

"Not so fast, not so fast!" said Michael. "Didn't you give up all claims yesterday? You can't play fast and loose with me this way! You're making trouble for me, and I've got to get something out of it."

They sat down on two lumps of sod and talked it over. Michael, shrewd student of human nature, saw that he must warily play poor Terence, who had already made compromises. After hinting at every available asset the older man had, Michael was at last forced to content himself with the paper Larry had written giving Cahill the cow's milk.

"But mind," said Michael, "all this is only to give you a clear field from Nelligan and other men. It lies in your own hands, not mine, to get Maureen. She's fighting mad that you jilted her."

"Sure if she'd have me yesterday, she will today," said Terence complacently. "You say she's gone to Wexford. When she comes back I'll fix it."

AFTER Cahill had left him, Michael threw down his hoe and hurried off to the Nelligan place, where he offered to sell Larry's write of hand to Mrs. Nelligan. She wanted it not only as a release from Cahill, but to hold over Larry's head as a sign of her magnanimity.

After a heated quarrel, Michael got ten shillings. He went home, trying to hearten himself with the thought of his success. But though he told himself over and over that he had a dowry of four pounds ten for the girl, and maybe a pig for himself, his words gave him no cheer, and his feet were leaden. Somehow, he refused to think of Maureen as married to Cahill; and if she really liked Larry, perhaps he had been working against her happiness. Besides, there was the chance that she would not want anyone interfering in her affairs; she might run away to Dublin to service, just to show that she had a mind of her own.

During dinner he was absolutely silent, and his wife followed his gloomy mood with anxiety. Being a tactful woman, she said nothing. When the meal was over, he went for a tramp over the turf, still out of sorts. By the time he turned homeward, he felt sure his mind would leap to meet his difficulties as they came. The first one met him at his neighbor's gate. Terence was leaning against the post with his unaccustomed smile.

I'VE been waiting to tell you the good news," he said; "and I'm waiting to tell Maureen. I've just been down to the priest's to ask him to put up the banns next Sunday. He was out; but I left a write of hand for him."

Michael could not find a word to say.

"I thought I'd better begin getting used to the gurrl right off," explained Terence.

Michael nodded, and went speechless along the path to his own cabin. His wife met him on the doorstep.

"Come in, avic," she said heartily, "and forgive me if I've been forehanded wid you. I couldn't bear to see the grave face of you at dinner; for I knew you were regretting the bargain wid Kate Nelligan. From the way Maureen acted this morning, and the way she quarreled wid Larry, I know she wants him. So down I went to the priest and left him a note, asking him to put up the banns next Sunday for Maureen and Larry. That'll just give them time to get it over before they sail for America."

Michael sank on the doorstep and groaned. "What is it, alannah?" cried Eileen. "Are you sick?"

"No, oh, no! Let me alone, woman! I must walk again."

He set off down the road at a tearing pace, with visions of the anger of the priest and the laughter of the neighbors. Him to be calling himself a good match maker! They'd say. If things were left in his hands, the whole parish'd be supping sorrow with the long spoon of grief. A nice coil he got people in, entirely!

MICHAEL sat down in the ditch not far from Nelligan's place and groaned aloud in bitterness of spirit. A startled face rose from the other side of the hedge.

"Is it you, Michael Dwyer? Are you sick?" cried Mrs. Nelligan. "I'm hunting a hen that

lays away from home, and I heard you groan." "You heard me laugh, you mean," said Michael, with cracked gaiety. Then a wild idea shot into his head, and he added, "Some women are so queer! The reasons they have for marrying the man they take are so strange they'd make you die of laughter when you don't die of crying over them."

Mrs. Nelligan, being Irish, was convinced by the paradoxical turn to the speech. "Who's got a strange reason for marrying?" she asked.

"Well," said Michael cautiously, "I don't know that I should be mentioning it to you, since 'tis yourself that's concerned. Is it your setting hen you're looking for, Mrs. Nelligan?"

"You've no call to be secret where I am concerned," said Mrs. Nelligan, the ready crimson coming into her face. "I never could bear people to know more of my affairs than I do myself; but around here they seem to. The saints give me patience!"

"I didn't mean to rile you, woman," said Michael softly. He leaped the hedge and, standing beside her, gazed at her admiringly. "And sure I don't blame Terence Cahill!" he murmured.

"You are as mysterious as if you were paid for it!" cried Mrs. Nelligan impatiently.

Michael started. "Well," he said, recovering himself, "it's only— You remember we spoke of a match for Maureen Mulcahey? Well, who do you think she's after? Terence Cahill! And all to cut you out, because 'tis well known he is crazy after you. But think of the folly of marrying a man just to cut out a much older woman. Not that you look so much older, Mrs. Nelligan; but of course 'tis always aisy for a young woman to cut out an older. I know Larry Nelligan could cut me out if I were single; and 'tis the same way wid women. 'Tis what time makes us pay,—us that are getting on for middle age."

His face was open and innocent; but his bland eyes were searching Mrs. Nelligan's expressive face, aware of every change that passed over it. Surprise, suspicion, resentment, rage,—they whirled their kaleidoscopic way and took her voice from her for several moments.

"Terence Cahill in love wid anny woman!" she said at last. "It's a pack of lies!"

"Oh, sure, Mrs. Nelligan, 'tis but your natural modesty says that. Doesn't he come to your house night and marning?"

"That was to get the milk."

"But you can't make the village believe that," said Michael. "The priest, now— But what's the use of talking, if Maureen's made up her mind to cut you out. The neighbors'll soon be forgetting she was able to do it. In five or six months something else'll happen, and they won't think of it again except to tell the people that visits them from other villages—"

"She's an impudent crathur!" cried the widow.

"Well, maybe she likes him," said Michael. "He's a fine man, is Cahill; hearty, and well off too. If only Maureen had the property you have, the two of them'd be the richest couple in the parish. And a dale of quinquessence is shown to rich people. Isn't it a pity it should be so, Mrs. Nelligan?"

"But," said the widow after a pause, "if Terence likes me—"

"That's just the grand joke of it," laughed Michael. "He does like you; but he doesn't know it. You should have heard the poetry he talked to me about your dress fluttering at the cow's head while he milked; but the poor omadhaun doesn't know enough of women to know he's in love. He's just in the state where he'd be wax in Maureen's hands."

There was a long pause, and then Michael added, "I wonder you never thought of taking Terence, Mrs. Nelligan. Larry will be sure to have you, either to marry,—for you know you wouldn't let his wife in the house,—or else he'll go to America on wan of them tickets he's got. 'Tis you need a man, and Terence is grand. I'd be only too flattered to undertake— You see, it wouldn't occur to Terence of himself—"

"What fee?" she asked abruptly.

"The calf of your cow," said Michael promptly, "and, while 'tis not my affair, sure I think when you get Cahill you should clear off that five-pound note he has ag'in' Larry."

"I owe the lad that," said the widow with some gentleness. "Well, you can have the